

Section 6: Model Base Reuse Plans

This section describes several model reuse plans that an LRA may follow for balancing the needs of the homeless with other needs in the community. These may be used as best practices/lessons learned from 1995 and later Base Closure actions. As the process begins, LRAs and homeless assistance providers may find it helpful to reach out to communities that have gone through the process for advice and tips. In addition, a number of successful strategies have emerged over the past three BRAC rounds that have worked to make the process run more smoothly and helped produce positive outcomes to address homelessness in their community. This chapter will outline some strategies that both LRAs and homeless assistance providers have used successfully to balance the various needs in the community including the need of the homeless.

Case Studies

In this section, three case studies highlight how these communities negotiated the BRAC process, successfully balancing the needs of the homeless in their community with other needs in their community. As you will see, these communities developed different mechanisms and processes that drew heavily from their community's strengths in order to organize, plan and implement a base reuse plan that successfully transitioned installations from military to civilian use. The communities highlighted were chosen to provide examples from rural, small cities, and suburban settings.

Naval Station Roosevelt Roads (Puerto Rico)

Summary

In late September 2003, the U.S. Congress directed the Secretary of the Navy to close the Naval Station Roosevelt Roads in Puerto Rico. This base closure process was not part of one of the previous BRAC closure rounds. The naval station was a sprawling 8,600-acre site located in a rural part of Puerto Rico. The base contained over 3,600 acres of land available for reuse and over 1,600 facilities. Since the naval station was located in a rural part of the island, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico took the lead in the redevelopment process appointing the Department of Economic Development and Commerce as the LRA. The Commonwealth and the LRA saw the closure of the naval station as a significant opportunity for economic development and job creation that would benefit all the citizens of Puerto Rico.

Planning Process

Early on in the process, the LRA designated its General Counsel to lead and organize the planning process to incorporate the needs of the homeless within the larger redevelopment effort. Identifying leadership and accountability as the process begins is important to ensure that the process runs smoothly and speaks with a single voice.

The LRA's first step in addressing the needs of the homeless was to assess the homeless situation in the communities in the vicinity of installation. Since the naval station was located in a rural area, the LRA analyzed the homeless situation in two small towns (Ceiba and Naguabo). Using the most recent Puerto Rico Balance of State Continuum of Care application, the LRA determined that there was a small homeless population in these towns - 36 individuals. In addition, the LRA found that the homeless were younger and had a higher representation of women than in the rest of the Commonwealth.

As a next step the LRA, working with the HUD Field CPD Office, initiated outreach to engage the homeless assistance providers in the two communities. The LRA made a presentation at a meeting of the Coalition of Coalitions (Puerto Rico's Homeless Planning Organization) hosted by HUD in San Juan.

In addition the LRA, with HUD's assistance, hosted two workshops for homeless assistance providers and other community organizations to explain the process for homeless projects and public benefit conveyances. Within these workshops, the LRA clearly explained the distinction between a project serving the homeless and a project serving the public, i.e., a public benefit conveyance. Ensuring the community had a good understanding of the difference early in the process prevented any misunderstandings and potential grievances later in the evaluation and selection process. These workshops also included tours of the base to view available facilities and learn about any land use restraints. In the second workshop, the LRA reviewed the Notice of Interest (NOI) Process and provided a recommended format for the Notice of Interest.

The LRA received two NOIs clearly labeled as being for homeless assistance. The LRA review committee reviewed both proposals. The review committee selected a transitional housing project planning to serve 6 homeless women who are victims of domestic violence and their families proposed by a local homeless assistance agency (Casa de la Bondad). The review committee felt that this project helps fill a significant gap in the Community's continuum of care. The review and selection process went smoothly with no opposition from the broader community. After the selection process, the LRA developed and submitted their application to HUD in December of 2004.

Successful Outcome

Casa de la Bondad's transitional housing project will serve 6 homeless women who are victims of domestic violence and their families. The project will occupy 6 housing units (4 BR) in the Nimitz housing complex. The LRA entered into a legally binding agreement (LBA) with Casa de la Bondad. As part of the LBA, a contingency process was established for negotiating alternative arrangements, i.e., site or compensation) if the identified site is deemed unsuitable based upon the results of an environmental review to be conducted by the Navy. The homeless service provider is currently working to implement the program.

Project Contact
Michelle Smith
HUD Puerto Rico Field Office
787-766-5400, Ext. 2084

Roosevelt Roads Reuse Plan Website:
<http://www.planrooseveltroads.com/english/index.html>

Key West Naval Air Station (Florida)

Summary

The Key West Naval Air Station was designated for realignment under BRAC 1995. As part of this process, the Department of the Navy identified certain parcels of land and facilities on the naval station as surplus. In 1996, the City of Key West, a small city with a population of approximately 27,000 citizens, established the Key West Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA) to develop a reuse plan for this excess property. The Key West economy is primarily oriented towards services and retail businesses which are part of its vibrant tourism industry. In addition, Key West's housing market has become increasingly dominated by outside investors and the seasonal home market. As a result, there is a recognized need for affordable housing opportunities targeted to year round residents. Finally, Key West's homeless assistance providers, through its Homeless Coalition, used the potential availability of property from the naval station consolidation to undertake a planning process of their own to determine the met and unmet needs of the homeless throughout Key West. Within this context, the LRA began the redevelopment planning process seeking to balance the economic redevelopment and housing needs of the community with the needs of the homeless.

Planning Process

The LRA retained the assistance of an experienced architectural and planning firm to assist with the overall reuse plan. The LRA began the process by assessing the specific needs of the homeless in the City of Key West. Key West is a small city and a Consolidated Plan was not available from which to draw information and data. The LRA collected information and data from the Monroe County Continuum of Care and interviewed government officials and homeless assistance providers. In addition, the LRA drew from the Homeless Coalition's Plan 1999 – The Homeless Element of the Key West Comprehensive Community Plan (Plan 1999) that identified the homeless community's met and unmet needs. As a result of this analysis, the LRA estimated the homeless population in Key West to be 147 individuals, broken down between 103 individuals and 44 individuals in homeless families. It is important to note that the LRA collaborated closely with the Key West's Homeless Coalition and the Continuum of Care in this analysis of need and the estimate of the number of homeless within Key West.

In response to the advertisements for surplus properties at the naval station, thirty-five notices of interest (NOIs) including nine homeless NOIs were received by the LRA. The LRA organized an extensive citizen participation process to evaluate the NOIs and determine the proposed uses of the surplus property. The LRA retained the Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium (an independent, non-partisan, arbitration organization) to facilitate public participation meetings which included priorities forums, design charrettes and alternatives generation workshops. Homeless coalition members participated actively in every meeting of the citizen participation process. Homeless assistance providers felt that their sustained participation within the process, i.e., attending all LRA-sponsored

meetings was crucial to ensuring that the final plan effectively addressed the needs of Key West's homeless.

As a result of the extensive community process, the LRA and the community determined that the Poinciana housing site, which contained 212 units of existing military housing on 36 acres, presented the best opportunity to "achieving the communities goals and objectives." The LRA's redevelopment plan for the site proposed 228 units of housing, including 50 units targeted for the homeless (i.e. 25% of the Poinciana units). The LRA felt that these 50 units targeted for homeless individuals and families proactively addressed gaps in the Continuum of Care for specific homeless sub-populations within the context of the "overriding need for affordable housing". In coming to this agreement, both the LRA and the Homeless Coalition felt that the reuse plan could not address every gap or need within the Continuum but could achieve a reasonable balance of addressing the needs of the homeless with other needs in the community, such as affordable housing and economic development.

To simplify the process and establish a clear line of responsibility and accountability for the redevelopment of the site, the City of Key West and the LRA developed a master development agreement with the Key West Housing Authority (KWHa.) In turn, KWHa negotiated with organizations that submitted NOIs to determine which homeless assistance providers would implement the activities. This negotiation was a collaborative process with the Southernmost Homeless Assistance League (formerly known as the Homeless Coalition) identifying the agencies. Once the organizations were identified, KWHa entered into legally binding agreements (sub-leases) with the seven homeless assistance providers.

Successful Outcome

The Reuse Plan for surplus properties at the naval station resulted in 50 units of transitional and permanent housing targeted to specific homeless sub-populations identified by the Homeless Coalition's Plan 1999.

Below is a summary of the homeless projects created by the Key West's Base Reuse Plan:

- 10 units of transitional/short-term housing for homeless men with substance abuse issues;
- 8 units of transitional housing for homeless families;
- 18 units of transitional/permanent housing for homeless men and women with substance abuse and mental health issues;
- 10 units of transitional housing for homeless families who are victims of domestic violence; and
- 4 units of transitional housing for homeless individuals who are physically disabled.

The Poinciana Housing site is surrounded by a fairly dense residential community. At the beginning of the process, there was strong opposition to homeless projects from the surrounding community. The homeless providers countered this opposition through coordinated engagement, educating the community about the details of each proposed

project and convincing them that the homeless assistance providers had the capacity and experience to be good stewards. The homeless providers engaged the community and its concerns through monthly meetings. Over time, the homeless providers addressed most if not all community concerns. As a result, the community's opposition diminished and was transformed eventually to overall support for these homeless projects.

In implementing these projects, the Rural Health Network (RHN) played an important leadership role coordinating the development efforts of the seven projects as well as providing technical assistance to the homeless assistance providers that had little to no development capacity or experience. The coordination of development activities amongst these projects and the provision of specialized technical assistance included:

- Environmental Considerations - The RHN collected all available environmental reports on the properties designated for the homeless projects as well as researched and accessed grant funding for lead and asbestos remediation.
- Coordination of Continuum of Care and State Funding – Recognizing that there were not enough funding resources for all the projects in one year, the RHN developed a funding plan that phased funding requests to HUD over a multi-year period.
- Technical Assistance Regarding Rehabilitation Activities – The RHN assisted several homeless assistance providers by completing rehabilitation, assisting them with funding, and retaining competent contractors. In addition, KWHHA assisted the providers by providing them with detailed cost estimates for the needed rehabilitation work.
- Infrastructure Costs - The RHN, the homeless assistance providers, the City of Key West and KWHHA worked to develop successful strategies to address infrastructure costs in turn reducing the cost to the homeless projects. In order to address sewer service and needed roadwork, a larger City replacement project was able to address the needs of the homeless projects. In terms of water connection, the projects were able to take advantage of recent upgrades accomplished by the Navy.

As a result of this balanced process, there are currently seven projects providing 50 units of transitional housing for a variety of homeless sub-populations including veterans, families, victims of domestic violence as well as homeless individuals.

Project Contact

Ms. Sandy Higgs

Formerly of the Rural Health Network

305-296-6227

Memphis Defense Depot (Tennessee)

Summary

The Memphis Defense Depot was closed in the 1995 BRAC round, and comprised almost 700 acres and over 130 buildings of various types (i.e. warehouses, maintenance buildings and other support buildings). The depot also included eight duplex housing units in four structures. The Memphis Defense Depot is located in an industrial section of Memphis adjacent to the local airport. The City of Memphis and Shelby County created a joint local agency named the Memphis Depot Redevelopment Agency as the Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA). The LRA's mission focused on a redevelopment plan that created economic development opportunities and replaced jobs that were lost due to the closing. The LRA clearly understood the need to identify all the communities in the vicinity of the installation by including both the City of Memphis and Shelby County within the larger Redevelopment Plan.

Planning Process

In order to effectively determine the needs of the homeless, the LRA reviewed the Consolidated Plans of both the City of Memphis and Shelby County. In this analysis, the LRA determined that the greatest need was for transitional housing serving both homeless individuals and families. Early on, the LRA made a deliberate decision to create an inclusive process reaching out to both the local homeless coalition named the Partners For the Homeless (The Partners) and the City of Memphis' Division of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Both of these organizations played an important role in developing and refining the process to engage, assess and select homeless project(s) for inclusion within the overall Redevelopment Plan. The Partners assisted the LRA outreach to the community's homeless assistance providers. DHCD was particularly helpful in identifying and engaging the specific homeless assistance providers that had the capacity and experience to effectively implement and operate a new homeless project. Through its experience administering the HOME and CDBG programs as well as organizing the McKinney-Vento homeless funding, DHCD was well aware of the community's homeless assistance providers, their current strengths and weaknesses and each agency's capacity to implement and operate a new homeless project. The LRA felt that this detailed knowledge was especially helpful in evaluating proposals from these homeless assistance providers.

The LRA enlisted both the Partners and DHCD in drafting the formalized Request for Notices of Interest (NOIs). The Request for NOIs contained background regarding the redevelopment process at the Memphis Depot; a description of the properties made available; a description of the evaluation criteria; a description of the evaluation process and an outline of the application requirements to submit a NOI for a homeless project. Once this document was developed, the LRA advertised the solicitation by public notice and sent invitations to over sixty local homeless assistance providers for a briefing and tour of the facility. Thirty-seven organizations and eight public agencies attended the briefing and tour. During the period of time that potential applicants were given to prepare their NOIs, the LRA offered the opportunity for an additional tour and consultation to interested agencies on a request basis. The LRA received six NOIs – five

from local homeless assistance providers and one from the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

The LRA continued to include both the Partners and DHCD in the screening and evaluation process. A review committee from the Partners (who were not associated with any of the NOIs submitted) initially assessed and ranked each NOI based upon the established evaluation criteria recommending specific homeless projects to the LRA. The DHCD reviewed NOIs, assessing the capacity of the homeless assistance providers. The LRA then selected two homeless projects for inclusion in the Redevelopment Plan. The projects were an affordable rental housing project for eight homeless families to be operated by the Metropolitan Inter-Faith Association (MIFA) at the former officer housing (4 duplex buildings) and a specialized job training and supported work program operated by the Memphis Leadership Foundation (MLF).

The LRA entered into a legally binding agreement (LBA) with MIFA that provides for a transfer of the four duplex houses, adjacent parking and related land (6 acres). The LRA entered into a short-term, five-year lease for the selected warehouse building and adjacent land to MLF since the Redevelopment Plan calls for the building to be demolished for future development. At the time, the LRA was committed to working with the MLF to identify a more permanent site for this valuable program. After the selection process and execution of these agreements with the homeless assistance providers, the LRA developed the Homeless Assistance Plan and submitted it to HUD for approval.

After the LBA was executed, MIFA chose not move forward with the implementation of the project. The LRA quickly initiated a second solicitation using the exact same selection process, again collaborating with the Partners and DHCD. The Partners evaluated and ranked all NOIs recommending a transitional housing project for homeless veterans proposed by Alpha Omega Veterans Services. Alpha Omega proposed a transitional housing program at the site (4 duplex buildings) of the former officers housing. After independently reviewing the NOIs with DHCD, the LRA accepted the Partner's recommendation and selected Alpha Omega Veterans Services. The LRA then contacted HUD and amended their Homeless Assistance Plan and executed an LBA with Alpha Omega Veterans Services.

In the implementation stage, the LRA continued to work collaboratively with Alpha Omega identifying funding to create a separate entrance to the transitional housing program and provide a fence around the 6-acre property. The LRA facilitated the hookups with the utility companies, but Alpha Omega was responsible for the cost.

Successful Outcome

Alpha Omega Veterans Services currently provides eight units of specialized transitional housing for homeless veterans. Through private fundraising efforts, the agency was able to cover all project startup costs to include utility hookups and minor renovations. Alpha Omega's Board of Director was actively involved throughout the acquisition and implementation process. The Memphis Leadership Foundation continues to offer the specialized job training and supported work program producing wooden pallets for commercial use by private companies at the Memphis Depot. Working collaboratively with the LRA and its Board of Directors, the MLF was able to find a permanent home for the training program at the Memphis Depot entering into a reasonable long-term lease

with a private industrial company that had some extra space. These homeless assistance providers did not experience any opposition from the surrounding community due to the small scale of the projects and the fact that the projects were naturally buffered by the industrial nature of the larger site.

Project Contacts

Mr. Jim Covington
President, Memphis Depot
1-901-942-4939

Cordell Walker
Executive Director, Alpha Omega Veterans Services
901-726-5678

Memphis Depot Website:

<http://www.memphisdepot.net>

Alpha Omega Veterans Services Website:

<http://www.aovs.org>